



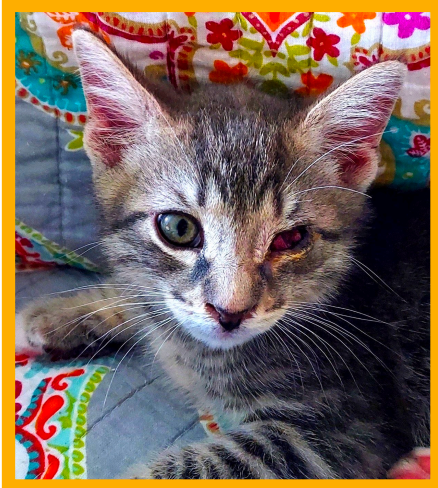
# AnimalFriends of CONNECTICUT

In this issue....

- p. 1 Orion
- p. 3 Being Left Behind
- p. 4 Our Bag of Tricks
- p. 5 Zachary
- p. 6 Our Impact data
- p. 7 Memorials
- p. 8 How to Donate

Fall 2023

*He was just three weeks old and had only one healthy eye with which to see his dark and damp world, living under a porch in Hartford. He had probably escaped under there to find refuge from things larger and scarier. He was in trouble. He was alone and confused and with the high summer temperatures he was getting dehydrated quickly...*



## Orion by Brenda

As my friend was walking her dog down her neighborhood street in Hartford, she noticed a tiny kitten peeking out from behind the lattice under a nearby neighbor's porch. She hurried home and got some cat food and placed it near the spot where she saw the kitten, thinking a litter and mom would emerge to eat. After waiting and watching for a while, only the little one ventured out. He was very hungry and had one eye completely crusted over and closed shut. After letting him eat for a while, she approached him, but he immediately took cover back under the safety of the porch.

She called me for help as I had the experience with trapping and rescue. It took two days of patience and persistence, but we finally got him out. I immediately began the hydration process with a bottle and KMR milk replacement. His eye was quite bad so I began a treatment of terramycin ointment as a start until I could get him in for veterinary care. He needed extra monitoring, so I took him home to foster.

His strength improved with the hydration and nourishment and within three days I "bundled" him in with another rescued litter that had a scheduled vet appointment. He was still too young and ill to get his vaccinations but he could be tested for FIV, Leukemia and Heart worm during an overall health check. I was grateful when all tests came back negative. The Vet advised me to keep up with the terramycin treatments for his badly infected eye. When his eye was not responding, I took him to the ER at Central Animal Hospital in North Haven. There they prescribed stronger medications. When another two weeks went by with still no improvement, I begged for an appointment with an ophthalmologist specialist at Central Hospital. Fortunately a few days later a cancellation provided the opening I needed to get him seen. The eye specialist said Orion's eye was probably damaged at birth from infection and he would have only limited vision if any vision at all.

Now after months of care, the infection is healed and he is a happy, mischievous kitten enjoying his toys and ready for a great life.

A few days after Orion's rescue, the mother cat and three other litter mates were seen in another location. All had terrible eye infections and by the time help arrived they were gone and not seen again. With the intense heat and serious infections, sadly, their survival was unlikely.

Like many of the city streets it is very common to find litters. My friend although inundated with homeless cats, keeps them fed and calls me when kittens appear.

To save one sick or injured animal takes determination, time and funding; dedicated volunteers and money are always needed.

## Animal Friends of Connecticut

is a non-profit, no-kill shelter dedicated to the protection of animals. We rescue stray, abandoned, injured and handicapped cats. All cats are given needed Medical care and vaccinations, as well as spay or neuter surgery for adult cats. The cats are cared for at our shelter or in foster homes until an appropriate placement can be found.

# Adoption, Fostering and Volunteering

## Pledge to Adopt Your Next Pet

Although AFOC may have adorable kittens available for adoption we encourage all potential adopters to consider the rewards of adopting an adult cat.

## Interested in Adopting ?

Visit our website and Petfinder and discover the pets that are up for adoption.

New cats come in all the time so our population does change. Please call **(860) 225-1339** for more information or Email: [adoptions@afoccats.org](mailto:adoptions@afoccats.org)

## Experienced Fosters Still Needed for Adult Cats.

Fostering is an important part of the adoption process. Fostering is one of the most rewarding things you can do for a homeless pet and for yourself. Fostering helps a cat get used to living in a home. Fostering gives an animal the love and attention they desperately need, greatly increasing their chances of being adopted.

As a foster you should be comfortable with:

- Administering medications, if needed
- Daily feeding, playing & attention

- Following special dietary needs
- Handling cats in and out of a carrier
- Transporting cats to Vet appointments, as needed

AFOC provides food, supplies and medications and pays for Vet care.

Please call the main shelter number at **(860) 225-1339** and leave a message.

## Volunteers Always Needed

AFOC is run by our very dedicated volunteers. There are plenty of opportunities to help.

AFOC volunteers are people like you, who love animals. If you can donate your time, your help will be greatly appreciated.

For more information, call us at **(860) 225-1339**

## Volunteer hours.

### When:

- Mornings 7:30-9:30
- Evenings 5-7
- One day per week or more if your schedule permits

### Responsibilities;

- Feeding (filling water and food bowls)
- Light Housekeeping-
- Litter maintenance

### Additional Volunteers needed

- Socialization of cats
- Outside maintenance
- Fundraising

## AFOC Management

**Director & President:**  
Sylvia Krajewska

**Director & Vice President:**  
Brenda Stawski

**Director & Treasurer:**  
Janet Bacon

**Director & Secretary:**  
George Murtha

**Director, Animal Behaviorist & Social Media:**  
Amy Caron

**Director & Special Needs Coordinator:**  
Pat Hirschy

**Director:**  
Lisa McKeon

**Director:**  
Ray Parker

**Adoption Coordinator:**  
Toni Seftor

**Newsletter Editor & Social Media:**  
Jane Wilson



## Being Left Behind

We often wish that cats could talk, so they could tell us their story; how they got to the point of rescue; what they went through and experienced during that time. Sometimes we get called about cats just wandering in an area for “awhile” and needing help.



**Alexander, left behind, outside after his owner moved away**

It's heartbreaking to think about how these circumstances come about. Some of our rescues have been left behind in an empty apartment and only discovered when a landlord enters days later to find the poor things with no food or water. Others are put outside when the family moves away, relying on the goodness of neighbors to feed them or they are left in dangerous situations to fend for themselves. Still others make their way to a colony of strays where they are not always welcomed by the other cats who are struggling themselves. Many of these cats are un-neutered or un-spayed which results in an increasing population of more strays without a home.



**Blue made her way to a colony for a food source**



**Kazoo was surrendered due to owner's eviction**

Then there have been times when we have been called by a Vet to accept a cat that has been brought to them to be euthanized because the owner has “travel plans”, a new “allergic” boyfriend, or a treatable condition that they don't want to pay for, or can't afford.

Formal *surrenders* are often a result of the owner's loss of housing, their inability to care for a pet or the elderly owner dies.

Shelters are helping as many of these “left behind” animals as they can and are working to care for them while trying their best to find them new homes. But, as it happens to more and more cats in these last few years, most shelters are being overwhelmed.

Meanwhile, cats know trauma and experience it in the same way that humans do. They feel the loss of what was a home, family, and the security of food and shelter. They become confused, depressed and scared and unsure of what is happening to them. Just like we wouldn't feel happy and social due to what we might be going through, a cat feels the same sense of insecurity. They have lost their “mom or dad” and the only home they have ever known.

Not every rescued cat has been abandoned, but being dumped, left behind, or uncared for are troubling trends.



**Grace was left in an empty apartment**



**Charlie was surrendered for a treatable condition**



*On any Sunday morning you can go to the AFOC shelter and find Melissa and Meghan, a mother daughter team, working as socializing volunteers. They have been doing this for so many years now that they are considered “pros” at what they do ! They know every cat in the shelter and what it takes to engage them. And they don’t stick to just the easy, friendly, ones either. They work with E V E R Y cat including the people shy and unfriendly ones ! When I stopped in there one Sunday I noticed they had a “bag of tricks” with them and so I asked them to tell me about it. Here is what they told me:*

## Our Bag of Tricks...

by Melissa and Meghan

In our “bag of tricks” we have all sorts of toys and treats to help us work with the cats. We have yarn toys, laser lights and wands with different kinds of attachments that appeal to the different personalities of the cats. For treats we have catnip, “Pure Bites” freeze dried chicken, “Temptations” and delectable squeeze up cat treats. We also have a back scratcher that looks like a cat paw for those feral cats that don’t want to be touched but enjoy the back of their necks and their cheeks scratched.

It takes time, patience and observation to learn what each cat likes to play with or what treats they absolutely love. A lot of the feral cats don’t even know how to play when they first come into the shelter.

We try different toys and see what catches a cat’s attention. We watch first to see if they track the toy’s movement or just ignore it. Once we find a toy that they track, we keep engaging them with that toy. When the cat is comfortable with us and the toy, they will start playing. For example, Arnold, one of the shy cats, likes to play with toys that have long strings on them that resemble a mouse tail.

It is so rewarding.

Some cats love the laser light. Gavin and Garret (two white sibling cats) were extremely skittish when we started working with them. They would run like crazy from one side of the room to the other, to hide. Once we



Gavin waits for the laser toy

learned that they were attracted to the laser light, we stood outside the room and shined the light through the screen in the door and they came out to play! Now when we leave the room they will often come out and sit looking at the door waiting to play.



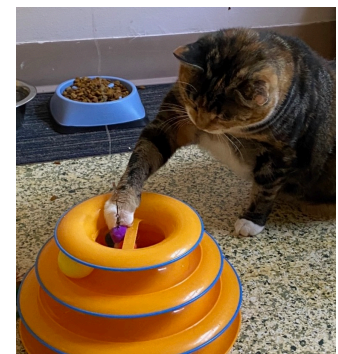
Elsa enjoys some dried chicken

Elsa LOVES freeze dried chicken treats. When we learned this, we would put the treats on our legs. She slowly worked up the courage to come up and take them off our legs and now she will take a chicken treat from us if we hold it in our fingers. We need to approach her slowly and show her the treat first, making sure there is a large enough piece for her to grab it with her mouth. Don’t try to touch her though. She doesn’t like that.

When we walk into a room, we say “Good Morning” to the cats and walk around and acknowledge each cat. Some of the feral cats will sniff our fingers or fist in greeting. Sometimes we get lucky and can slip in a quick touch of their paw too. With the cats that are really scared we will take a wand and rub it on the back of our hand to transfer our scent and then let them sniff the wand.

Chip and Posie, two of the more feral cats, share a room now.

Originally Chip was in our outdoor enclosure and whenever I went to visit, he would hide. I would locate him, talk to him, give him some slow blinks and leave some treats. When he was moved indoors for the colder months, it made it easier to work with him. At first, he would only play with a wand toy in his tent. He likes a bumblebee on a wand or a toy with feathers. First, he would attack the toy but now he plays. When Posie became his roommate, it actually helped his confidence. Posie likes to play and is curious. She loves it when I take a wand toy and drop it in the center of a circular ball toy. She always has to get up and walk over to check it out. Now Chip will occasionally come out to play because Posie is having fun! ( cont’.on page 6 )



Posie engaging in play



## Zachary- L.C.S.W.

Andrea, a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) has a decade of experience treating many types of mental health issues working in “in-patient” and “out-patient” settings. She also utilizes a virtual platform, so that clients can receive therapy from the comfort of their own home, on a lunch break, or when traveling out of the area.

Andrea is also an animal lover and is experienced with raising rabbits, dogs, horses and cats, as she lives on a small gentlewoman’s farm in the Connecticut countryside. When I met Andrea last spring through the shelter facebook page, she was in search of a working barn cat for her horse barn. In talking with Andrea, she expressed her willingness to help the shelter through fostering of any shelter cats or kittens that were in need of a little extra special care and attention. So when Cashmere one of the shelter residents needed to have fluid treatments for his end-stage renal failure, Andrea took on the foster challenge. A few months later, a young male cat was surrendered to the shelter after bouts of chronic, stress cystitis. After about a week in the shelter it was clear that the shelter setting was not the ideal place for this friendly male when he stopped eating and became depressed from the loss of his former family and home. Our shelter director once again reached out to Andrea to ask if she could foster Zachary who needed to be on a special diet and needed to be monitored for urinary blockages. In just a few days of living in Andrea’s home as a foster, Zachary perked right up and began to show his true self. Once he became adjusted to his new foster home, Andrea allowed him the freedom and access to all the rooms in her house including her home office.



Zachary

One morning as she prepared for her first appointment in her tele-health practice, Andrea poured herself a cup of coffee and went to her home office to meet her first client of the morning in the virtual waiting room. As she sat at her desk at the computer, Zachary made his way into the room, hopped up on the desk top and parked himself in front of the screen to help with the therapy session. The first client seemed to like seeing Zachary and enjoyed his presence during the session.

Andrea says, “Now he’s always on screen when I do my psychotherapy sessions. My clients ask for him by name. He lays in my arms on his back and touches my face and kneads on me during the session. When one appointment is finished he takes a “break” and then he comes back in time for the next session. Zachary is a funny guy!!! He’s so cute when he climbs up my pant leg and wants me to hold him over my shoulder. He never misses a tele-health meeting. He sits around my neck, on my shoulder or walks in front of the screen. He makes my clients laugh and relax. If Zachary is missing in the first few minutes of our session, they always ask... *Where’s Zachary today?* I just say, ‘He’s finishing this week’s scheduling.’ Then he crawls up my leg again and there he is much to the comfort and delight of my patients. I know I’ve only had a few fosters, but Zachary holds a special place in my heart. He’s done some amazing things for me and comforted me when Cashmere died. As my apprentice, I have awarded him an honorary LCSW degree of his own: Zachary, Licensed Cat-Sense Worker.”

*Editor’s Note: Andrea ended up officially adopting Zachary into her family of animals and she continues to foster pregnant cats and kittens for AFOC.*

“Thank heaven for little girls  
For little girls get  
Bigger every day  
Thank heaven for little girls  
They grow up in  
The most delightful way.”

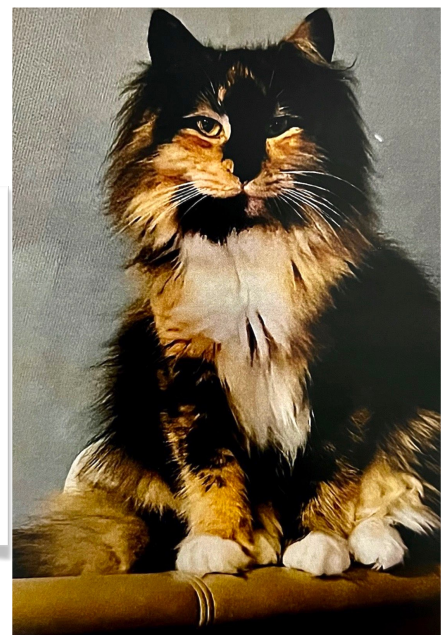
Readers of a certain generation may remember the delightful song “Thank Heaven for Little Girls” made famous by the French actor Maurice Chevalier. This verse came to mind when I saw this recent photo of Dabney who was adopted as a kitten from AFOC in October 2022 !

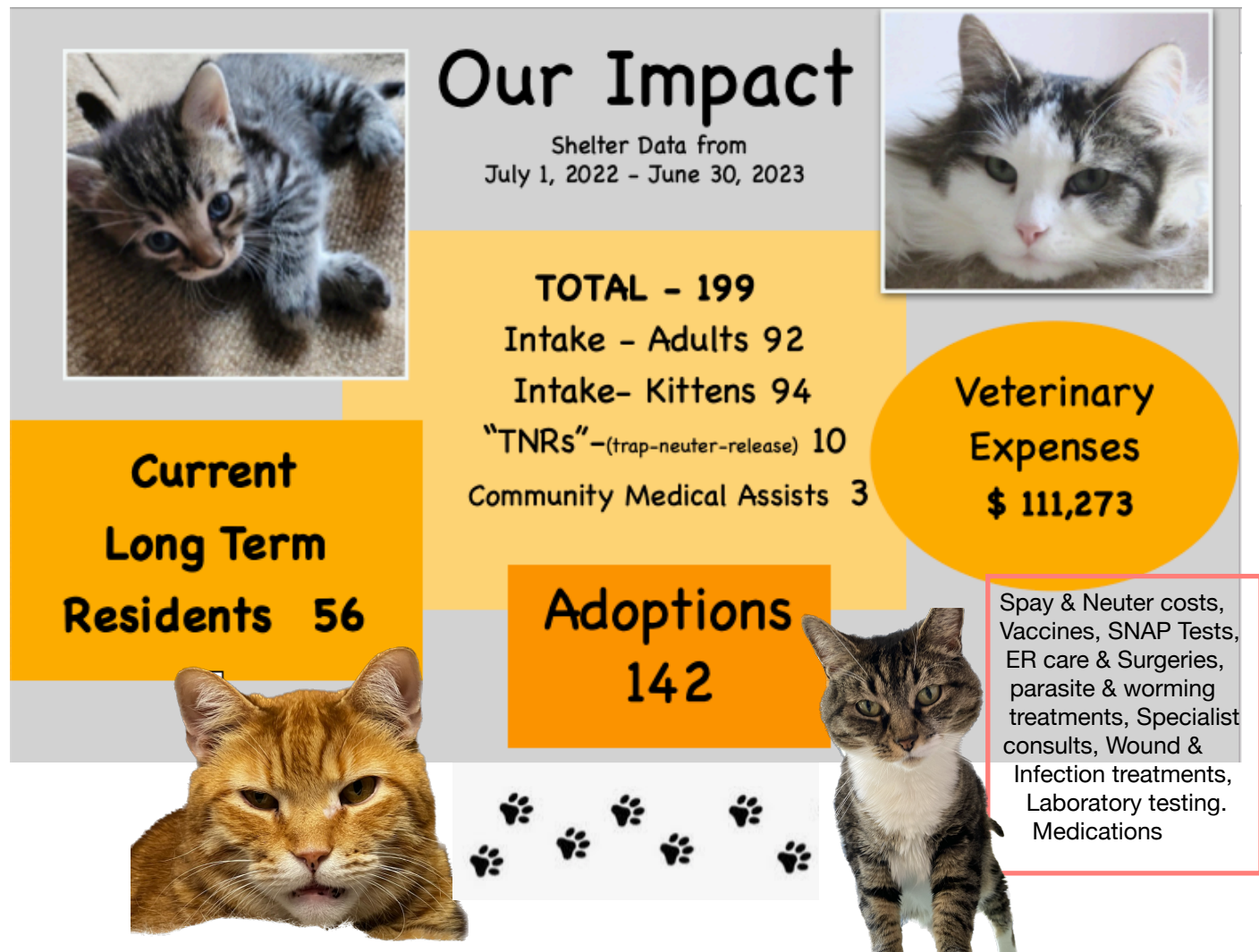
Littermates were: Murray, Dustin,  
Hoffman & Mom Tootsie.  
Her name is Takara now !

From “cute”  
to  
“stunning” !



SHE IS A BLESSING TO OUR  
FAMILY.  
VERY SMART, PLAYFUL AND  
FULL OF LOVE!





## Continued from page 4. "Our Bag of Tricks"

A back scratcher is a great way to touch cats that don't like being touched by a hand. There is a process of introducing this, too. First you need to see what type of reaction you get when you carefully introduce it. You don't want them to fear you, only trust you.



Peppermint enjoys the back scratcher

Once they start sniffing it or there is no reaction, we take the smooth part on the back side of the scratcher and lightly and slowly stroke it along their

cheek and back of their neck. If they like it, we flip it over to the actual scratcher and see what they think of that.

It is fun to watch them as they start enjoying it and realize that it feels good! Some of them really enjoy it now and even relax on their side.

The "Delectable Squeeze Up" treats are also a great tool. It is a good way to get a scared cat to come closer. Once they get comfortable enough, we put some of the treat on our finger and let the cat lick it off as a way to experience human contact as something good. Hopefully, this will make human contact less fearful.

The feeling is indescribable when you make headway with a scared and fearful cat and eventually see it become adopted. It takes, time, patience, perseverance and a "bag of tricks" to get there, but it is so worth it in the end when you have a "people friendly" cat.



## Donations In Honor...



**Stacy Lee Cahoon** in memory of our beloved **Coco** adopted from AFOC 17 1/2 years ago

In memory of **Barbara Antisdale** of Milford, CT, a rescue dog owner and lover, by her son **Michael Antisdale**

Donation from 2 adopted cats from AFOC  
**Henny and Walter**

In memory of **Carolyn Waltman** of Vernon CT

**Carol Pinkston** in memory of **Ruby** the incredibly fortunate pet of **Paul and Lorrie Kellog**

**Betsy Anderson** in memory of **Toni Sefter's** beloved **Sukey Tawdry**

**Melinda Garcia** in Memory of **Sukey Tawdry.**

**Toni Sefter** in memory of **Sukey Tawdry**, 19 years of unconditional love

**Jan Sefter** in memory of **Sukey Tawdry**

**Henry Thomas** In honor of the BEST cat foster parents, **Jane & Court Wilson** ! And thank you for blessing me with my furry boy **Philip.**

**Lori Ryan** In memory of Jack. **Jack** was adopted with his brother by my dear friend, **Dawn** 18 years ago from AFOC.

**Winslow Runde** and **Diane Gainsanti** in honor of **Victoria**

**Sandra Anasoulis** in memory of her hen, **Sucre** and rooster, **Icarus**

**John and Kim Hanusovsky** in memory of **John Clark Owings**

**Mary Vallario** in memory of her beloved husband **Robert Vallario**

**Anne and John Mullin** in memory of **Robert Vallario**

**Kim Franceschina (Twill)** In memory of **Bob Vallario**, with love for **Mary Lou** and the family, from **Joe and Kim Twill**

**Elaine Kotler** In honor of **Gilligan, my little Buddy.** "You had the pinkest nose and the furriest tail. You were my soft kitty, warm kitty. You were Grandpa's favorite and he is looking after you now. Skipper, Lovey and I will cherish furever our time together".

**James Bechard** in memory of **Maureen Bechard**

**Chris and Reed Cass** in honor of **Janet Bacon's** birthday

**Barry and Teresa Hughes** in memory of **Joyce Witik**

**Rebecca Wareing** in loving memory of **Adrienne Ramsey's dog Obi**, a very good boy

**Joanna Blichcharska-Sweika**  
In loving memory of **Mr. Mieczyslaw Miczko**

**Joanne Feinberg** in memory of **Tucker** and **Timothy Tiger Feinberg**



## Animal Friends Of Connecticut, Inc.

P.O. Box 370306  
West Hartford,  
Connecticut  
06137-0306

**Phone**  
**(860) 225-1339**

### Email:

[afoc@AnimalFriendsOfCT.org](mailto:afoc@AnimalFriendsOfCT.org)

### We're on the Web !

[www.animalfriendsofct.org](http://www.animalfriendsofct.org)

### Find us on Facebook !

Official FB page:

**Animal Friends of Connecticut**

Also "Like" us @

**Cats of Animal Friends of CT**

We're on Instagram too !!

[animal\\_friends\\_of\\_connecticut](#)

[catsofafoc](#)



## Remember Donations Save Lives !

Our organization depends, and always appreciates the generosity and involvement of people like you. Every contribution goes towards helping Animal Friends Of Connecticut to continue to rescue and shelter homeless pets.

**Every little bit counts !**

## How to Donate

### • Mail- In Donations:

Complete the donation form below and mail your tax deductible check. Please **make check payable to Animal Friends of Connecticut**, P.O. Box 370306 West Hartford, Connecticut 06137-0306

### • Paypal: It's fast and convenient, and safe !

You can now use your credit card and donate on-line through **PayPal**. Go to the AFOC website for a link to donate

### • United Way: Please specify that your donation is intended for AFOC

• **I-Give Matching Contributions:** Register with I-Give online. Shop online with major retailers and help AFOC at the same time ! All transactions will contain a percentage donated to AFOC.

• **AFOC Wishlist on Chewy:** Consider donating from our wishlist here [https://www.chewy.com/g/animal-friends-of-connecticut\\_b105880047](https://www.chewy.com/g/animal-friends-of-connecticut_b105880047)

• **Required Minimum Distribution (RMD)** For tax saving purposes you can also give through your RMD.



Please reach into your heart and give what you can afford to help these animals get a second chance in life. Your gift is tax deductible.

*We would be happy to talk with you about endowments, grants, gifts-in-kind, corporate sponsorship or other long term support. Please call us at (860) 693-0303*

**Animal Friends of Connecticut, Inc.**

**P.O. Box 370306**

**West Hartford, CT 06137-0306**

\_\_\_ \$ 5.00 Giving

\_\_\_ \$10.00 Helping

\_\_\_ \$ 25.00 Contributing

\_\_\_ \$ 50.00 Supporting

\_\_\_ \$100.00 Sustaining

\_\_\_ \$ 250.00 Sponsor

\_\_\_ \$ 500 Patron

\_\_\_ \$ Other

☐

Please send information on automatic transfer donation

☐

Name & Address changes: ( please print carefully)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street/P.O. Box \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

For new members only:

☐

I'd like to become a member, please add my name to the Newsletter list